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The challenge of Socialism

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The Challenge of Socialism

DAVID SAVILLE MUZZEY.

A Help to the Moral Life

WILLIAM M. SALTER.

Meaning of Membership in the New York Ethical Society

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THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIALISM*

By David Saville Muzzey.

Every civilization is a compromise. Association in any enterprise whatever, political or social, religious or secular, international or parochial, is possible only by the abatement of some part of somebody's interests or choice. The human will, unchastened by the salutary attrition of fellow-wills, is a tyrannous titanic force, which moves straight to its goal, and grows surer of its own infallibility the longer its period of immunity. It ends in anarchy. Society, which is the antithesis of anarchy, exists only by the restraint and balance of the individual wills; and the more delicate the civilizing influences of science, letters, and intercourse have made the balance, the more stable tends to be the form of society conditioned thereby. We need not at all assent to Rousseau's fanciful theory of the *origin* of human society in the deliberate, contractual sacrifice of the untamed individual will to the general welfare, if we still recognize that the amelioration, yes, even the bare continuance of human society at the level attained, does actually depend on just such a sacrifice.

Probably not a decade of the world's history nor a corner of the world's surface has ever been free from men or women who have been convinced that the sacrifice was vain. Probably for tens who have registered their protest, or devised a remedy, thousands have lived in baffled rebellion, and died in baffled resignation. Eight

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centuries ago Omar Khayyam launched his impotent challenge:

> "Ah, love! could thou and I with fate conspire
> To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the heart's desire!"

Twenty-three centuries ago Plato dreamed of a society in which men should turn from the black shadow-pictures on the walls of their prison house, and face sunlit reality. And for aught we know, twice twenty-three centuries before the ancient records of clay tablet and papyrus, men were compounding panaceas for the ills of their doomed society, or embracing the mild protest of monastic retirement.

The thoughtful and historical-minded to-day will not marvel at the unrest in our society, or seek to drown the voices of discontent by raising in counter-clamor that most inappropriate word of all the world to raise in clamor, "Peace! Peace!" Each man and woman among us, according to the light vouchsafed to each, should purify his political and social vision, and do his part to purge from the body social those hideous superstitions and sanctioned malefactions whose combined power has wrought the tragedy of history.

We are face to face, in our state of the opening twentieth century, with conditions of the utmost gravity. A combination of factors, all good in themselves—unsurpassed wealth of natural resources, long years of peace, miraculous multiplication of labor-saving inventions, space-mocking engines of transportation, giant intellects of organization, and giant hands of direction—has resulted in a situation critical in the extreme. Why? Because the

economic and material vigor of our country has outrun its political wisdom and its ethical warnings. Because the unit of production has grown until it has not only burst the geographical, mechanical, industrial bonds of a generation ago, but threatens to shatter the political and moral framework of our democracy as well. We read that Mr. Morgan, beside his chain of ten or a dozen banks, controls industries capitalized at $4,700,000,000—an amount of wealth greater than the total valuation of the thirteen American Colonies at the time of the Revolution, greater than the combined wheat, corn, and live-stock trade of our country to-day. And Mr. Morgan is only one —*primus inter pares*—among the group of financial Atlases on whose broadcloth shoulders this free government seems to rest. These men have their emissaries in our halls of congress; their agents control our press; they appear, in the majestic calm of the gods of old, theophanic, *ex-machina*—and, pouring out a few tens of millions like oil, they soothe the turbulent waves of the stock-pit; they fix the price of our meat and drink, our clothing and shelter; and to them our elected magistrates run to ask their favor that this government may live!

To some robustly optimistic minds this triumph of industrial concentration is altogether a good and wholesome thing. Perhaps the most remarkable expression of economic "stand-pattism" is the recent book of Chancellor James R. Day, of Syracuse, *The Raid on Prosperity*. Chancellor Day deprecates the raid. He warns a sensation-loving and meddlesome government not to endanger the progress of the greatest age in all history. He scorns the regulator and the trust-buster. Hear some of his sentiments:

"Millions have taken the place of hundreds of thousands as a

measure of wealth. Billions will displace millions before the century closes . . . . The man who is shouting himself hoarse over trusts and corporations and swollen fortunes will take his place in history with the men who smashed Arkwright's loom and Whitney's cotton-gin, and the pamphleteers who ridiculed Stephenson's locomotive . . . . The poor man owes more to corporations than to any other commercial force for his opportunity to work at good wages, or to work at all, for that matter. Let those who hate the corporations go back to the canal-boat, the little railway, the stage-coach, and a dollar a day wage."

So admiration for the strong men who have thrown bands of steel across our continent, and gathered the harvests of half a world in their arms, takes hold of many a mind that sees in the protest of the soberest constitutionality or sincerest conviction at best only the short-sighted policy of obstruction to our swelling columns of exports, and at worst the hateful, envious shriek of confiscation and class war.

No less proud of the splendid achievements of our industrial age, but far less confident in the wisdom of the present management of our great industries is a large class of men, our President in the lead, who look to government regulation as the panacea for fevered economics. They would bring the trusts to book—the statute-book. By commissions, investigating committees, federal prosecutions, enormous penalties, they would curb the spirit of lawless gain, and persuade the lion of the Montana forest to lie down in peace beside the lamb of Wall Street. To the robust optimism of the stand-patters these apostles of government regulation seem like mischievous meddlers; they destroy confidence, reduce our prestige in the eyes of Europe, side-track thousands of freight cars within stone's throw of the grain and cotton they should be moving, and drive the already meagre supply of currency into barren vaults, strong-boxes, and stocking-toes. To another class of critics the regulators seem

rather stupid than deliberately unwise, in their hope to stamp out the disease of economic dropsy by strengthening and protecting all the evils on which it feeds—high tariffs, monopolistic franchises, corporation banking, private ownership of the sources and tools of production, artificial markets, and all the manifold ills of the capitalistic regime. As well, say these critics, put a wooden dam across the Mississippi and open a thousand fresh springs at its sources.

So we have a third class of men who look with the utmost anxiety on the capitalistic usurpation, and with utter misgiving on the power, or even the ultimate will, of our government as at present constituted to dethrone the usurpers. Their remedy is nothing less than a complete reorganization of society—a new earth. Their dirge of warning is at the same time a pean of thanksgiving; for the cruel regime which allows a few to revel in wanton luxury while the millions are being pushed closer and closer to the starvation line, is to be swept away. The ballot is in the hands of the oppressed. Economic pennilessness will wake to its political omnipotence. It will rise and assert its strength; and, although in its first clash with entrenched capitalism it will set in motion a battle beside which all other revolutions of history will look like a storm in a glass of water, and although for a while "the extreme medicine of state will," in Burke's vivid phrase, "become its daily bread"—yet the end will be peace. A new society, disposing of its own boundless resources for the good of all, producing for use and not for profit, enjoying life instead of fighting on the one side to sustain it and on the other side to accumulate the millions that turn its enjoyment into the gall of bitterness. The men who look for this radical transformation

of society are called Socialists, and the various programs by which they hope to bring it to pass, or according to which they see it inevitably developing, are called Socialism.

No word in the English language, not even *religion* itself, is harder to define than *socialism*. It is a perfectly colorless word. According to its etymology every man who believes in a society of human beings—every man, that is, above the lowest savage—is a socialist. Yet perhaps no other word has so rapidly acquired a sinister meaning. The socialist is commonly believed to be a violent, envious, ignorant, lazy man, who prefers to divide up the wealth others have accumulated rather than to earn his own living. In the jingle of Ebenezer Elliott, "the Corn-law Rhymer:"

> "What is a Socialist? One who is willing
> To give up his penny and pocket your shilling."

But this epigram we shall agree, with a little reflection, is quite as apt to characterize the capitalist. The unfortunate qualities of envy, indolence, and greed are too widespread to be the distinct property of any school or party. And it is to be feared that a majority of those who so confidently and finally announce the dismaying catalogue of socialist sins have never read or thought it worth while to read a single reputable socialist on the principles of his party. Huxley once said that the unpardonable sin of science was pronouncing opinions, dictated by prejudice, on matters never faithfully studied; and indeed most of the pulpit tirades against that great man himself were from clergymen who considered it a sin to read and understand the man whom they vilified. The prophets are generally stoned before they get through their first few sentences!

I am not here maintaining that the socialists are the true prophets or that socialism is the inevitable form of society. I am simply maintaining that it behooves us to study very carefully a movement which has grown faster in the last generation than any other movement in the history of the world, with the exception of the Mohammedan religion in the years immediately following the death of the prophet. The socialist vote increased in the United States from 96,000 in the presidential election of 1900 to 409,000 in that of 1904. In France it increased from 47,000 in 1887 to 1,120,000 in 1906; in Germany from 30,000 in 1887 to 3,008,000 (far the largest party vote in the Empire) in 1903; and in the countries of western Europe and the United States from 30,000 in 1870 to 7,000,000 in 1905. As yet we do scarcely more than rub our eyes and stare at these figures. But they invite us to read and ponder.

In the brief hour at my disposal I have planned to deal with three aspects of socialism: the first historical, to give a summary view of the course of socialistic thought in the last half century; the second expository, to set forth some of the tenets agreed on by the socialists quite generally; and the third critical, to indicate what should be the attitude toward the socialist claims and principles of those who, like us, are pledged to the doctrine of the supreme value of the ethical life.

The rise of modern socialism lies within the memory of living men. The events of the year 1848 gave it its impetus. For in that year political reaction triumphed over dawning liberal ideas in central Europe, and the hopes of economic reform in the regular course of middle-class government were rudely cast down. By a singular coincidence, there was cast into the revolutionary workers of

of 1848 one of the most remarkable of the world's writings, the *Communist Manifesto.* The chief author of the Manifesto, Karl Marx, was a powerful genius, trained in the study of history and philosophy, a cogent writer, and a dauntless fighter. He stands as the founder of modern Socialism. Before Marx there had been plenty of men, from Plato downward, who had dreamed of a better society; plenty who, like Sir Thomas More, Campanella, Harrington, Cabet, Mably, and Morelli, had imagined Utopian societies on earth, sun, or moon—anticipating the modern utopias of Bellamy, H. G. Wells, and Anatole France. But till Marx *socialism* meant *Utopianism.* The utopians either retired from society to form a little community of their own, or else made over society by some artificial, mechanical devices, like those of Bellamy's *Looking Backward.* Their ideal state was not only actually opposed to the present world, but it was also fundamentally antagonistic to it. Utopianism could not be derived from the present world by any natural development. It was cataclysmic. Marx, on the other hand, laid at the foundation of his socialism (which he called *communism* to avoid the Utopian implications in the word *socialism*) a philosophy of history. He said not, this is what we should like to make society, but, this is what is actually happening in society. Marxian socialism was natural not artificial, a growth from within not a force from without, an evolution not a cataclysm, scientific not visionary.

Marx declared that "in every historic epoch the prevailing mode of economic production and exchange, and the social organization necessarily following from it, form the basis on which is built up and from which alone can [illegible] ned the political and intellectual history of that

epoch." The present *bourgeoisie* or middle-class had effected, he declared, a great world revolution in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, by overthrowing feudalism, but they had now created a proletariat, a wage-oppressed, expropriated fourth estate, which would soon swamp the *bourgeoisie* themselves. They had collected the masses in great towns by their centralization of industry; they had kept the course of industry in perpetual flux by rapid successive transformations of the instruments and processes of production, and by continual recurrences of commercial crises; they had reduced the yeomanry and small tradesmen and artisans to a proletariat, and were making the life of the proletariat one of privation, uncertainty, discontent, and incipient revolution. "They treated the laborer like a ware, buying him in the cheapest market for the cost of his production (the bare cost of his living), and taking from him the whole surplus value of his work, after deducting the value of his subsistence." We do not seek to destroy the state, cried Marx, but only the capitalistic government of the state. We do not wish to abolish property, but rather that system under which property *is now abolished* for nine-tenths of society. We do not advocate the destruction of the family, but rather the restitution of the family now destroyed by a regime which makes a slave of the father, and takes the mother for the factory and the child for the mill, to make up good measure for the capitalist's profits. We demand that all who are able shall labor, that landed property be expropriated, that inheritances be abolished, that the state control means of transportation, that national factories be established, that child-labor cease, and that education be public, compulsory, and gratuitous. Marx concludes with a ringing appeal to the workers of

all lands: "The proletariat have nothing to lose but their chains! They have a world to win! Proletarians of all nations, unite!"

Cicero said that Socrates "brought philosophy from heaven to earth," that is, from its vain speculations on the nature of science (without experimentation), and clever dialectics on the nature of justice (without principles), to a reasoned study of the human mind and its powers. So, we might say, Marx brought socialism from heaven to earth—out of the clouds of imaginary utopias into the everyday atmosphere of politics and economics. Although earlier socialists, notably St. Simon, had in the first half of the nineteenth century, anticipated some of the Marxian positions, such as the essential antagonism of the appropriating and the expropriated classes, nevertheless it was Marx who first clearly and forcibly divorced socialism from its utopian implications and complications. I would call your attention to four features of the Marxian doctrine which have characterized most of the socialistic thought to our own day, and which consequently entitle Marx to be called the founder of modern socialism.

First, Marx gave socialism a philosophical basis in history. He showed his doctrine to be an inevitable stage in a great evolutionary process. As a student and devoted follower of Hegel, Marx adopted the theory of the unfolding of the consciousness of freedom (Hegel's *Freiheitsbewusstsein*) through the successive harmonies of opposites. Critics of Marx soon pointed out that he allowed his Hegelianism to sharpen the actual conflict between the classes to too fine a point, but his general thesis of the evolutionary significance of socialism, as against the cataclysmic utopian view, they adopted.

A second feature of Marxian socialism is its interna-

tional character. The utopias were all exclusive groups of the elect. Marx appealed to the workers of all nations. The Communistic League, which he and Engels founded, became a few years later the International Workingmen's Association. The International was discredited and disrupted by its revolutionary exercises at the time of the Paris Commune (1871), and socialism drew for a while into a nationalistic phase. But the hollowness of Bismarck's imitation of state socialism in Prussia, the combined hostility of state, church, and army in France, the progressive dampening of political aspirations among the radicals of almost all the European countries, have led the socialists back to the international platform advocated by Marx, until at the recent congress held at Stuttgart it was even demanded by some of the delegates (notably the French) that socialists should refuse to bear arms for the fatherland against their comrades of foreign nations.

A third feature of Marx's socialism is its close connection with the working people. Marx made socialism a program for the proletariat, whereas it had been a pastime for the dreamer. Any man with a reforming or protesting interest; any radical dissatisfied with church or state or society in general was a "socialist." He might be laboring to establish Apostolic Christianity or to abolish God, to house all the workers in model tenements holding two thousand each, or to have a religious test introduced into the Constitution of the United States. Marx called on the proletariat to wake to their cause and fight their own battle. He bade them be the chief actors in the drama of social regeneration, instead of the passive recipients of the blessings planned for them in the utopias. He interpreted the worn phrase, "dignity of labor" as a prophetic

motto, pointing to a time when the laborer should enjoy the only dignity possible—the dignity of freedom.

And finally, Marx made socialism a political affair. To be sure, in his day the ballot was as generally denied to the proletarian as it is granted to him to-day. By the circumstances of the time, then, Marx was unable to make his appeal, as present-day socialists do, to the working class at the polls. Agitation had to take the place of the ballot in his scheme, and therefore his socialism has a more revolutionary aspect than it would probably have, had Marx lived in these days when the ballot is in the hands of the workingmen. But while the ballot does not figure in Marx's *Manifesto,* still he is the father of political socialism by virtue of his clear development of that class-consciousness which makes the socialist cast his ballot as a party man to-day.

This four-fold nature, then, of the Marxian type of socialism—an inevitable, historic, evolutionary, class-conscious movement of the proletariat of all nations to gain for themselves through political agitation their emancipation from economic oppression—characterizes it as the fountain-head of all socialistic theory and the germ-cell of all socialistic growth during the last half century.

Into the details of that growth in America and the various countries of Europe (some statistics of which I noticed a few moments ago) we cannot obviously go in this hour. In general it may be remarked that while the progress of democracy may have tended to relieve that extreme tension between the ruling and the governed classes, which Marx experienced in the midst of the reactionary wave of the year 1848, still the industrial concentration, the monopolization of the means of production in the hands of a few, the power of the capitalist to reduce

the wage-earner to virtual slavery, has become accentuated in our day, rather than diminished.

Pari passu with the growth of socialism has gone the development of the trade unions. Trade unionists and socialists have quite often been identified, or at least greatly confused with each other. The trade union is very much older than Marxian socialism. And, until in very recent times the distinction between skilled and unskilled labor has been almost obliterated by the development of machinery, the trade union was rather a conservative than a radical force. It faced the masses rather than the employers. Its object was to keep out the swarm of unskilled laborers who were pressing for admission into the trades, and whose entrance would cause wages to drop. The long apprenticeship is a thing of the past. Industrial schools teach thousands rapidly to handle the tools of modern machinery, which are fed by the workers of the lower grades of intelligence. The trade union has no longer much to fear from socialism, and all modern signs point to a *rapprochement* between the two. Large numbers of socialists are anxious for the consolidation of interests. Vaudervelde, the veteran Belgian socialist, said at the Stuttgart Congress: "The increase in the efficiency of the trade unions is of infinitely higher significance for the working class than the capture of a few seats in Parliament." To be sure, at the meeting of November 15th, at Jamestown, of the American Federation of Labor, the delegates voted three to one against government ownership of railroads and mines. But that was rather from a divergence in view as to the best method of securing the due recognition of the rights of labor than from any hostility to the socialists. The trade unionists still doubt the efficacy of public owner-

ship, as against the general strike; but they are beginning to realize that the strike becomes ineffective in proportion as the trade is democratized, and that scabs and strike-breakers are likely to be more willing to thwart the strike in proportion as they are more numerous and more able to do so. Perhaps the alternative will be presented to the unions of quietly joining the socialists in political action for economic reform, or of openly proclaiming themselves the armed guardians of the portals of their trade.

Of the movements more or less allied with Marxian socialism—of Fabianism, with its forensic interest and its municipal activities, of the socialism of the chair, the economic speculations of college professors, of christian socialism and the brotherhoods and societies of semi-religious, semi-economic aim—there is not time to speak now. We must pass to the second aspect of our subject, namely, a brief exposition of some of the leading tenets of socialism.

With its fundamental Marxian doctrine that all forms of political and social life are determined by economic factors, socialism naturally makes a revolution in economic conditions its first demand. The natural sources of wealth and the machinery of production must be "returned" to the people, in order that those who labor may fully enjoy the fruits of their labor. Ownership and use must be joined. Production for the sake of profit-making, with all its unnatural stimulation of markets, even to waging unholy wars in distant lands, must give place to production for need in consumption. The whole capitalistic system of rent, interest, and profit is an incubus on society. By it the past weighs on the present like a mountain. In our bourgeois society the labor of the liv-

ing goes to augment the vast masses of capital already accumulated by the labor of the dead, instead of the labor of past generations being as it should a means of enlarging, enriching, stimulating the life of the present generation. The earth and its fulness belongs to the living. But our labor is sold before we are born, our lives are mortgaged, enfoeffed to the lords of capitalism, before we came into the world; our strength is a tribute paid to the cunning masters of past ages; our seven youths and seven maidens are devoured yearly by the Minotaur of mammon in the labyrinth of mine and mill. Nay, the laborer is doubly a serf; he not only works at another's bidding and pleasure, but he works blindly too—to ends that he has not conceived, through means that he does not control. Insensibly he has been deprived of the interest in his work, and left only with its drudgery and monotony. Gradually the manipulation of his products has been taken from him, while the penalty for their miscarriage has remained. The meat industry has been divorced from the ranch and put into the hands of the packers; the cream and butter industry has been separated from the dairy and concentrated in the hands of middlemen; the grain crop has been taken from the farmer and delivered over to the great elevators and railroad corporations!

Such is the impassioned cry of the socialist. His program is more than a theory; it is a religion. Redemption is his creed—the redemption of the earth, which lieth under the bondage of accumulated capital.

By just what means political, educational, legal, industrial, this redemption is to be accomplished the socialists are, of course, not agreed. When were the apostles of the world's redemption ever agreed on means? When did creeds, christian or pagan, ever show unity? For

some socialists entrance into the councils of state has been the way of promise; for others parliaments have been "the marsh in which socialist energies are hopelessly engulfed." Many welcome any measures of government which look to the reform of capitalistic tyranny, while more "fear the Greeks even bearing gifts," and repudiate any concurrence with bourgeois politics as a surrender of principle. Some find the agrarian problem at the bottom of the whole question, others see it primarily as a problem of production and distribution, others still as a question of consistent democracy, a desideratum of ethics, or religion pure and undefiled. But in all the declarations of the socialist party, in America or Europe, that have come within my reading, although there is ample profession of a revolutionary aim (that is, the changing of the government into other hands), I have never seen advocated the doctrines which many respectable opponents charge to the account of socialism—anarchy, atheism, confiscation, free-love. That these things are direct corollaries of the socialist program many of their opponents believe. It is for them to labor to substantiate such belief by convincing argument and example.

The anarchists say, No government, for governments oppress us by taxes—but the socialists of Germany expelled the anarchists from their ranks in the Erfurt Congress of 1891. Their example was followed by the Austrians and the Italians in 1892, and by the International Socialist Congress of London in 1896. Said Liebknecht, one of the acknowledged leaders of German socialism: "The anarchists of Europe could be put into a couple of police wagons. With their ridiculous revolutionary phrases, their senseless assassinations, and their stupidities generally, they have done nothing for the laboring

classes, but have worked into the hands of their adversaries." Undoubtedly many socialists are atheists, as are many capitalists. Atheism is not a plank in the socialist programs, however. They have constantly declared religion to be a private matter with which they did not meddle. Any student of the movement has a perfect right to say, if such be his conclusions after fair study, that socialism must inevitably lead to the destruction of state, family, business, and character; but he has no right to say that the socialists *propose* to destroy any of these things. Indeed, the Socialists propose and claim to save all these things, and to be the only force that can save them all, from sure destruction. We may flout the sanity of their claim; we cannot deny its sincerity. And we may well ponder which is the wiser and safer attitude, that of the socialists who say, Behold this instant danger of destruction at the hands of capitalism; let us up and meet it now! or that of their opponent, Prof. Theodore D. Woolsey, of Yale, who says: "If unfettered freedom can bring about a state of things in which a few great merchants, manufacturers, ship-owners, transporters, money-lenders can absorb the capital of the country, it will then be time to rectify the evil, if it can be done, by appropriate legislation."

I have tried to state the main thesis of socialism, in this brief time at my disposal, and I wish your indulgence for a few minutes longer, in which I may suggest something of the attitude of mind which it is fitting for us to take toward this movement. That there is room for the widest difference of honest opinion on the subject, I would be the last to deny. Herbert Spencer, a life-long student of social conditions, wrote only a few days before his death (October, 1905): "Socialism will triumph . . .

and it will be the greatest disaster the world has ever witnessed." William Morris, on the contrary, as confident of the triumph of socialism, hailed "the wonderful day a-coming, when all shall be better than well." But whether we judge socialism favorably or unfavorably, it is of the first importance that we treat it fairly, "on its merits and not in its spelling;" that we judge it by the writings of its acknowledged leaders—Marx, Lassalle, Bernstein, Liebknecht, Bebel, Vollmar, Kautsky, in Germany; Vaillant, Guesde, Jaurès, Hervé, in France; Vandervelde, in Belgium; Loria and Ferri, in Italy; Aveling, Morris, Blatchford, Webb, Hardie, in England; Simons, Kirkup, Hillquit, Spargo, in America. Thousands have a ready and final condemnation of socialism on their lips who have not read a single one of these authors, and whose only information on the subject is the repetition of a neighbor's repetition of some venomous editorial on socialism in the columns of a newspaper whose every utterance, except the weather prediction, is governed by a party in Wall Street. The ethical judgment is first of all a judgment from sufficient information.

Again, as we insist on fair-mindedness in judging the validity of the socialist theories, we must insist on fair play in the agitation for the socialist program. Violence, in a country of law, where the will of the people has chance to express itself in due forms of legislation, we unhesitatingly condemn. Demagoguism, the appeal to the base passions of envy, hate, and greed, we reject as a wicked and stultifying practice. We are jealous, too, of the rights of quality. Merit must not be confused with demerit, industry with indolence, thrift with shiftlessness, mental endowment with mediocrity or dullness. The largest freedom compatible with the health and service-

ableness of society must be preserved, our varied tastes, gifts, callings must be encouraged and enriched, not suppressed or levelled. We shall examine the program and the practices of socialism, then, if we are lovers of fair play, to see whether they support us in these demands and condemnations, and if they do not, we shall reject, *and know why we reject,* the doctrines of socialism.

Further, it is our duty to discover and rebuke, all claptrap methods of reform, all rosily advertised panaceas, all undigested schemes of ushering in the millennium Prof. Simon Patten, of Pennsylvania, has given us a remarkable little book in the last year entitled, *A New Basis of Civilization.* He reminds us of the long way by which we have come to our present eminence—and misery. He tells us that we are still in thought and instinct the children of the men whose life depended on their neighbor's death, whose wealth depended on their neighbor's poverty, whose pleasure depended on their neighbor's pain. The cruel competitive habits of that pain economy in which there was not enough fruit of man's industry to supply all, have been carried over as deleterious survivals into our age of a surplus economy, in which there is more than enough for all, were it rightly produced and rightly apportioned. He warns us to beware of believing too readily that the "weight of centuries" would drop from the back of "the man with the hoe," if only the implement in his hands were his own or if he had not rent to pay for his stony quarter acre. "He comes to us from yesterday's wrongs, and generates beings who are carrying into to-morrow the birth-marks of to-day's evils." In the light of such words we shall ask, then, very seriously whether competition is the life and health of society, as Benjamin Kidd maintains, or only a most

pernicious survival and dismal delusion; whether we are not to be ready in this twentieth century to welcome "mutual aid as a factor in evolution" (to adopt Prince Kropatkin's phrase) and agree that co-operation works in higher spheres of human development than competition; whether we shall not confess that mankind is ready now to trust the appeal of service to the various causes of art, letters, industry, medicine, education, to stimulate in him his best endeavor, in place of the eternally reiterated call of the dollar; whether men and women will not now at least make a beginning of transferring their satisfaction from the enjoyment of things which they have in excess of or to the exclusion of their fellows, to things which they may share in common with their fellows. To all these vital questions the challenge of socialism should rouse us.

But most significant of all the features of the ethical attitude toward socialism should be a readiness to believe that a new society is a possible consummation; that forms of political and economic structure are not fixed but fluid; that we are still in process of achieving intellectual freedom, moral responsibility, and social brotherhood. The men of a century ago, the men of '76 in America and the men of '89 in France, had a lively faith in their power to transform a society oppressed in law and old in abuse. It often seems to me that we have lost some of that vigor of political protest, and transferred all our faith to the increase of material wonders. We are not much surprised at any number of figures in our statistics of crops and commerce. We accept the *Mauretania* as a prophesy of what will come shortly in ship-building. But we are hopelessly astounded before the proposal of a new form of society. The draft of a new state is a marvelous thing

in the eye of our modern Solons. Yet when did mammon ever set his rainbow in the sky in token that the capitalistic regime should not go the way of the feudalism which it outflooded!

In these last days, for the first time in the history of civilization, mankind has reached a point of efficiency where the means of satisfying his needs are far in excess of the needs themselves—yet millions of human beings pass their lives in toil, misery, and want. We have discovered the secrets of earth and air; we have made the rocks, the waves, the winds, and the lightnings the ministers of our wants and pleasures. We have explored the past ages of man and sounded the starry abysses of the universe. Yet we have not taken one step toward securing that seemingly most elementary right of man, the right to enjoy the fruits of his labor.

Socialism claims to secure that right. Have we weighed its claim? Have we cared to examine the system? Has it ever crossed our minds that our children's children may wonder that the universal sadness of a world in which men and women spent lives of miserable want in the midst of abounding wealth and died of starvation in sight of mansions fit for kings, should have "appealed to our transient sympathies, but could not absorb our deepest interest?"

A HELP TO THE MORAL LIFE

By William M. Salter.

The moral life, to which in our better moments we aspire, is the life dominated by the good purpose. It is not merely one right in the eyes of the world, but one in which the animating thought is to do right and to do all that is right. It is a life the centre of which is within, and in which hidden things—thoughts, feelings, imaginations—count as much as anything that others can take notice of, and more. May I be wholly pure, wholly true, wholly patient, wholly brave, wholly free from vanity and pride!—that is the instinct of the moral life.

There may be various helps to such a life, but one that I have now particularly in mind would be a book that should put us into the frame of mind we desire, that should serve in the midst of our busy lives to remind us of higher things; that should freshen our aspiration and nerve our will. Almost every one, who has tried the experiment of setting aside a little time each day for serious thought, knows how difficult it is to concentrate one's attention without some external help. At times good thoughts visit us; at other times the soul is barren and dry,—our efforts seem like pumping an empty cistern. It is, of course, possible that our moral insensibility may be so great at a given moment that nothing can break it up; but often by reading some chapter or passage in an appropriate book we may find ourselves passing into a serious mood without effort or struggle. I should convey a poor idea of what I have in mind, if it were thought

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